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Borough of Leominster

HEREFORDSHIRE



ANNUAL REPORT

ON THE

State of the Public Health

For the Year 1945

Staff of the Public Health Department

Medical Officer of Health	...	...	H. F. GREEN, M.A., M.B., D.P.H.
Acting Medical Officer of Health (Deputy County Medical Officer)	...		I. F. MACKENZIE, M.D. (Edin)., D.P.H., D.T.M. & H. (Private Tel., Weobley 59)
Clerk	...	...	B. J. SCANDRETT (On War Service from 1939)
Temporary Clerk	...	...	MISS D. M. J. BRAMFITT
Sanitary Inspector	...	...	A. L. SMITH, M.S.I.A., C.R. San. I. Cert. Meat and other Foods. Cert. C.I.S. (Tel., Leom. 257).

Public Health Office : 4, Church Street, Leominster (Tel., Leom. 95).

To the Chairman and Members of Leominster Borough Council.

MR. CHAIRMAN, MEMBERS,

I present herewith the Annual report for the year, 1945.

At time of writing, your Medical Officer of Health, Dr. H. F. GREEN, has happily returned from service with H.M. Forces and resumed duty.

The arrangements which were made on the eve of his departure in 1942 were designed to provide a means for emergency action in the event of outbreaks of disease ; and also to enable the really essential day to day duties of your health department to be carried on by medical officers experienced in public health, without reducing further the then serious shortage of medical manpower. Events have demonstrated that this scheme, which was conceived under difficult circumstances, was sound ; and though more responsibility fell on your Sanitary Inspector, he, being conscious that he had the support and backing of the considerable resources of the County Council Public Health Department and of the Medical Research Council's Laboratory service, shouldered it the more happily. Gratitude is due to him for his creditable response to the additional calls made on him during these last four years.

I. F. MACKENZIE,
Acting Medical Officer of Health.

November, 1946.

SECTION A. STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

Area (in Acres)	8,728
Number of inhabited houses (end of 1944) according to the Rate Books ...	1,660
Rateable Value	£33,905
Sum represented by a Penny rate	£138

EXTRACT FROM VITAL STATISTICS OF THE YEAR :

BIRTH RATE (per 1,000 of estimated resident population)	16.8
STILL-BIRTH RATE (per 1,000 Live and Still births)	29.4
DEATH RATE (per 1,000 of estimated resident population)	13.8
INFANTILE MORTALITY RATE (per 1,000 live births)	50.5

DEATHS FROM PUERPERAL CAUSES : There were no deaths from Puerperal infection nor from other Puerperal causes in 1945.

COMPARABLE DATA FOR ENGLAND AND WALES, 1945 :

Live Birth Rate	16.1
Death Rate	11.4
Infantile Mortality Rate	46.0

SECTION B.—GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA. LABORATORY FACILITIES.

Laboratory facilities continued to be available at the County Public Health Laboratory, Hereford, which is under the administration of the Medical Research Council.

CLINICS.

There are none provided by the Authority.

Under a County Council Scheme there is one Clinic operated within the Leominster Borough :—

It is the Child Welfare Centre which is conducted each Friday at 2 p.m. in the annexe at the Leominster District Hospital.

The nearest Venereal Diseases Clinic is at the County Hospital, Hereford.

An Orthopaedic After-Care Clinic which is organised on a voluntary basis, is held in the Hospital Annexe.

I am indebted to Mr. A. S. Smith, Sanitary Inspector to the Council, for the following Statement (Sections C to E), furnished under Article 27 (Sub-Section 18) of the Sanitary Officers (Outside London) Regulations.

SECTION C.—SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES AND INSPECTION.

WATER.

Chlorination of piped water supplies was continued throughout the year.

PIPED SUPPLIES.

- The water supply of the area and of its several parts has been satisfactory
(a) in quality, (b) in quantity.
- BACTERIOLOGICAL EXAMINATIONS.
Raw Water before treatment—four samples taken and all reported upon as satisfactory.
Water after chlorination—forty-one samples taken, of which forty samples were reported upon as satisfactory.
- CHEMICAL EXAMINATIONS.
Raw Water before treatment—one sample taken and reported upon as satisfactory.
Water after chlorination—one sample taken and reported upon as satisfactory.

4. No plumbo-solvent action—hard water.
5. The bacteriological sample reported upon as being unsatisfactory showed 1 coliform bacillus per 100 ml. in 2 days at 37°C. Streptococci were absent in 10 ml. The findings indicated the presence of small numbers of organisms of intestinal origin in the supply after chlorination. A re-sample was taken from the same house tap shortly afterwards, the tap being heat treated, whereupon the report was satisfactory.
6. Number of dwelling-houses and population supplied from Public Water Mains :
 - (a) Direct to houses—1259 houses. Approx. pop., 5,000.
 - (b) By means of stand pipes—101 houses. Approx. pop., 400.
 The approximate number of houses relying on well waters is 189. Approximate population, 700.

Samples taken and submitted for analysis :

(a) Piped supplies (house taps, waterworks well and Midsummer Meadow well)	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	47
(b) Wells	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	7
(c) Streams	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
(d) Open-air Swimming Bath	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2

REMARKS. The following Out-Parish areas are not provided with piped water supplies : Brierley, Broadward and Elms Green, Cholstrey, Ebnaal and Stagbatch, Ginhall Lane, Hyde Ash, Aulden and Wintercott, Ivington, Newtown, Stretford and Hennor, Wharton and Marlbrook. In general the water supplies for houses in Out-Parish areas are shallow wells, usually unlined and of a type subject to contamination. Many houses are without sufficient water during dry summers. Piped water supply exists in the Borough Proper, and a portion of the Out-Parish.

DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE.

HOUSE DRAINS.

New drains laid (old houses)	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Cleansed, trapped or ventilated	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	24
Inspection chambers built (old houses)	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Septic tanks cleansed or built	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3

BOROUGH PROPER.

Drainage of old houses is in the main poor, consisting usually of unjointed pipes, devoid of inspection chambers, or ventilation shafts.

OUT-PARISH.

New houses by Septic Tanks.

Old houses—generally to ditches (cesspools or septic tanks infrequent).

WATER CLOSETS.

Conversions or renewals	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	6
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BOROUGH PROPER.

Common usage of closets, usually by the occupants of two houses, prevails in many cases. A type of closet existing on a large scale is the old fashioned long hopper with a wooden surround which is subject to fouling.

OUT-PARISH.

Pail and privy closets predominate.

SEWAGE DISPOSAL.

No Borough Sewage Works exists and the position in regard to sewage disposal is as indicated in previous reports.

RIVERS AND STREAMS.

No complaints have been received in respect of rivers and streams during the year.

REFUSE DISPOSAL.

Tipping has been continued at the public tip with satisfactory results.

Collections in the Borough parish take place once or twice weekly according to locality. In the Out-Parish there is no public collection, though certain houses have the refuse removed by the Council for a yearly charge.

RODENT CONTROL.

Sewers were treated for 5 days, but revealed little evidence of rat infestation.

Several treatments at the public Abattoir yielded good kills.

SANITARY INSPECTION—HOUSING.

The extremely unhealthy conditions of some 500 working-class houses is still in existence as mentioned in prior reports, and this, allied with a serious housing shortage, renders life for approximately one-third of the population exceedingly primitive and unhappy. A consistent yearly production of new houses in sufficient numbers up to a stage which will permit elasticity of movement and the eradication of slums, is the only solution to a grave problem.

TABLE SHOWING INSPECTIONS CARRIED OUT DURING THE YEAR TOGETHER WITH THE ACTION TAKEN AND THE RESULTS.

INSPECTIONS UNDER	No. of Inspections	Informal Notices served	Statutory Notices served	Notices complied with
Housing (1936) Act	145	—	—	—
Housing (Public Health Acts) ...	199	104	21	95
Factories	3	—	—	—
Cowsheds and Dairies	105	5	1	5
Bakehouses	7	—	—	—
Food Premises	49	—	—	—
Slaughterhouse	1100	—	—	—
Schools	2	—	—	—
Water Supplies	57	—	—	—
Infectious Diseases	11	—	—	—
Miscellaneous Visits	7	—	—	—
Milk Samples	64	5	—	5
Totals... ..	1749	114	22	105
Defects remedied	...	...	...	119
Dustbins renewed	...	...	...	107

COMMON LODGING HOUSES

None in the Borough.

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS.

No outstanding developments.

TENTS AND CARAVANS.

Camping does not exist on a large scale—no sites registered.

BED BUGS.

Although many old houses are infested, no cases were reported during the year.

DISINFECTION ON ACCOUNT OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

Premises fumigated 7

Mode of disinfection: Formalin lamps and liquid spraying. Small portable Sack Disinfectant is available.

SECTION D.—HOUSING.

A preliminary review indicates the approximate position as follows :

		<i>Categories.</i>				
		1	2	3	4	5
No. of houses	...	744	202	95	9	499

INSPECTION OF DWELLING HOUSES DURING THE YEAR.

1.	(a)	Total number of dwelling houses inspected for housing defects under Public Health and Housing Acts	...	...	...	...	243
	(b)	Number of inspections made for the purpose	...	...	...	...	344
2.		Number of dwelling houses found not to be, in all respects, reasonably fit for human habitation	...	...	...	...	96

ACTION UNDER STATUTORY POWERS DURING THE YEAR.

Proceedings under Public Health Act :—

1.		Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied	...	...	...	...	21
2.		Number of dwelling houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices :					
	(a)	By Owners	...	...	...	...	10
	(b)	By Local Authority in default of Owners	...	...	...	...	Nil

VAN DWELLINGS.—Nil.

SECTION E.—INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

1. MILK SUPPLY.

Routine Inspections of farms and dairies.

- (a) Examination for bacterial content—Samples sent to County Laboratory.
 (b) Examination for Tubercle Bacilli—none by Local Authority.

Two cowhouses have been brought up to higher standards and improvements effected at other premises. One T.T. licence was suspended and then restored.

2. FOOD PREMISES.

Routine Inspections from time to time. General standard of cleanliness is good.

3. MEAT.

MEAT INSPECTION (PUBLIC ABATTOIR).

Centralised slaughtering under the Ministry of Food scheme of control is in operation. Areas served are Leominster Borough, Leominster and Wigmore Rural District, Kington Urban and Rural Districts, and Weobley Rural District. Inspection is carried out by your Sanitary Inspector, who is a qualified Meat Inspector. This responsibility entails for him considerable additional evening and week-end work.

The undernoted were slaughtered and inspected during the year :—

<i>Beasts</i>	<i>Pigs</i>	<i>Sheep</i>	<i>Calves</i>	<i>Total</i>
1266	293	7891	211	9661

Diseased Meat discovered and dealt with

ALL DISEASES EXCEPT TUBERCULOSIS.

	<i>Beasts</i>	<i>Pigs</i>	<i>Sheep</i>	<i>Calves</i>
Whole Carcases condemned	34	3	46	13
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	365	23	186	6
Percentage affected with diseases other than Tuberculosis	31.6%	8.9%	2.9%	9.0%

TUBERCULOSIS ONLY.

	<i>Beasts</i>	<i>Pigs</i>	<i>Sheep</i>	<i>Calves</i>
Whole Carcases condemned ...	25	—	—	—
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	19	3	—	—
Percentage affected with Tuberculosis	3.5%	3.0%	—	—
Weight of diseased meat discovered and dealt with	<i>lbs.</i> 37695	<i>lbs.</i> 782	<i>lbs.</i> 2974	<i>lbs.</i> 957
				<i>Total</i> 42408

The percentage figures show the proportion of food animals found diseased.

METHOD OF INSPECTION.

In accordance with Ministry of Health Memorandum 62 (Foods), with certain relaxations.

The Public Health (Meat) Regulations, 1924, are well observed by all meat traders. No Meat Marketing Scheme under Part III of the Regulations is in operation. Byelaws are in force respecting slaughter-houses.

4. OTHER FOODS.

The undernoted foods were surrendered during the year.

Canned goods and packages:—65 tins Fish, 5 stone Figs, 95 tins Vegetables, 3 jars Cabbage, 12 tins Soup, 212 tins Milk, 30 lbs. Jam, 20 lbs. Sausages, 156 lbs. Raisins and Dates, 6 lbs. Butter, 73 lbs. Sugar, 63 packets Toast, 5 tins Stewed Steak, 1478 lbs. Canned Meat.

SECTION F.—PREVALENCE OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

With the exception of Measles and Whooping Cough the incidence of notifiable disease within the borough during the whole of 1945 was very low indeed. Even in the case of Measles and Whooping Cough the number of notifications was negligible in comparison with the much higher occurrence in other parts of the Northern Combined District. There were two instances of Diphtheria and only one of Scarlet Fever.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASE DURING THE YEAR.

	<i>Total Cases Notified.</i>	<i>Cases Admitted to Hospital.</i>
Measles	15	Nil
Whooping Cough	11	Nil
Scarlet Fever	1	Nil
Pneumonia (Primary & Influenzal)	2	Nil
Erysipelas	4	Nil
Puerperal Pyrexia	1	Nil
Diphtheria	2	2
Cerebro Spinal Fever	1	1
Acute Poliomyelitis	1	1

ANALYSIS OF TOTAL NOTIFIED CASES, ACCORDING TO AGE.

<i>Disease.</i>	<i>Age of Patient.</i>														
	0-1	1-2	2-3	3-4	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-10	10-15	15-20	20-30	30-40	Over 40	Unknown	Total
Measles	1	3	2	—	4	—	1	2	1	—	1	—	—	—	15
Whooping Cough	2	—	2	1	1	2	1	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	11
Scarlet Fever	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1
Pneumonia	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	2
Erysipelas	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4	—	4
Puerperal Pyrexia	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	1
Diphtheria	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	2
Cerebro-Spinal Fever	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Acute Poliomyelitis	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1

DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION.

The state of immunisation of the child population of the district at the end of 1945 is indicated in the table below :—

<i>Under 5 years of age</i>		<i>Between 5 and 15 years of age</i>	
<i>Number</i>	<i>Percentage of group</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percentage of group</i>
166	40.0%	527	59.0%

The unsatisfactory response to the Diphtheria Immunisation scheme which was noted in the report for 1944 continued during 1945. It became clear, however, from enquiries which were made to ascertain the reason for parental indifference, that some mothers experienced difficulty in bringing young children to the clinics even when these were held at the nearest school. The introduction of general practitioners to the Council's scheme may improve the position inasmuch as they can, where necessary, immunise in the home.

Proposals to this end will be placed before the council early in 1946.

TUBERCULOSIS.

At the end of 1945 the Tuberculosis Register contained the names of 20 males and 16 females who normally reside within the Borough.

During the year ten new cases were notified, eight on account of Pulmonary Tuberculosis, and two because of the presence of the disease in parts of the body other than the lungs. During the same period, five deaths from Tuberculosis occurred.

CASES ON THE TUBERCULOSIS REGISTER.

<i>Year.</i>					<i>Pulmonary.</i>		<i>Non-Pulmonary</i>	<i>Total.</i>
1939	...	...	...	...	6	...	6	12
1940	...	...	...	...	9	...	9	18
1941	...	...	...	...	11	...	13	24
1942	...	...	...	...	13	...	14	28
1943	...	...	...	...	14	...	14	28
1944	...	...	...	...	20	...	16	36
1945	...	...	...	...	20	...	16	36

PRINCIPAL CAUSES OF DEATH (all ages).

<i>Disease.</i>					<i>Males.</i>	<i>Females.</i>	<i>Total.</i>
Pulmonary Tuberculosis	...	...	...	...	3	2	5
Cancer (all forms)	...	...	...	...	—	7	7
Diseases of Heart and Arteries	...	...	...	...	25	17	42
Bronchitis	...	...	...	...	1	2	3
Pneumonia	...	...	...	...	1	1	2
Nephritis	...	...	...	...	3	3	6
Death by Violence (including Road Traffic)	...	...	...	...	5	2	7
Congenital Conditions	...	...	...	...	1	2	